

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7346

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKR

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USUN NEW YORK 328

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 2081

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, PFOR, US, IV

SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: IVORY COAST

REF: STATE 037591

1. FOLLOWING IS REPLY TO QUESTIONNAIRE SEEKING INFORMATION
ON HOST COUNTRY MULTILATERAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES.

RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO QUESTIONS ASKED PARA 7 REFTEL.

A. IVORY COAST'S PRIMARY NATIONAL INTEREST HAS BEEN, AND

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WILL REMAIN, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. ITS ECONOMY IS BASED
ON AGRICULTURE, AND THE EXPORT OF A FEW IMPORTANT COMMODITIES,

SUCH AS COFFEE AND COCOA. IN A MULTILATERAL CONTEXT, THIS MEANS THAT IVORY COAST'S FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE IS TO COORDINATE WITH OTHER THIRD WORLD NATIONS IN NEGOTIATING FOR A FAIR AND INCREASING RETURN FOR ITS PRODUCTS. IVORY COAST HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN PREPARED TO SACRIFICE OTHER INTERESTS TO THIS END, AND HAS ON OCCASION ALLIED ITSELF IN INTERNATIONAL FORA WITH NATIONS WHOSE GOVERNMENTS OR IDEOLOGIES MAY BE REPUGNANT TO IT. HOWEVER, IVORY COAST IS BASICALLY PRO-WESTERN, FAVORS ECONOMIC LIBERALISM AND ENCOURAGES FOREIGN INVESTMENT. IT RECOGNIZES LEGITIMATE CONSUMER NEEDS AS WELL AS THE ESSENTIALITY OF CONSUMER-PRODUCER COOPERATION. TO THE EXTENT THAT PROGRESS IS MADE TOWARDS ITS PRIMARY MULTILATERAL OBJECTIVE, IVORY COAST WILL BE PREPARED TO TAKE POSITIONS INCREASINGLY INDEPENDENT FROM THOSE OF THE "THIRD WORLD" OR "NONALIGNED" BLOCS. THE 7TH UNGA SPECIAL SESSION AND THE U.S. POSITION THREAT WENT FAR TO ADDRESS GOIC CONCERNS. THIS WAS IN GOOD MEASURE RESPONSIBLE FOR IVORY COAST'S EXEMPLARY (FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW) VOTING RECORD AT THE LAST UNGA. IVORY COAST COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. DURING NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A COFFEE AGREEMENT WAS HELPFUL, AND THE GOIC IS PLEASED WITH THE U.S. DECISION TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT. THE GOIC SHARES U.S. DISSATISFACTION WITH THE NEW COCOA AGREEMENT, AND HAS ASKED THE U.S. TO MAKE CLEAR TO CONSUMING NATIONS ITS DESIRES FOR A WORKABLE AGREEMENT ON COCOA.

(1) ANOTHER IMPORTANT MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC OBJECTIVE IS OBTAINING FOREIGN INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT THE GOIC'S AMBITIOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN. WHILE THE IBRD IS EXTREMELY ACTIVE IN THE COUNTRY WITH STANDARD LOANS, THE IVORY COAST HAS TOO HIGH A GDP TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR IDA LOANS. THE THIRD WINDOW OF THE IBRD WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO THE GOIC PROVIDING IT MEETS THE GOP QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS. THE PICTURE IS COMPLICATED STILL FURTHER BY AN EFFECTIVE 40 PERCENT CUT IN THE UNDP BUDGET FOR 1976. ANY LOSS OF CONCESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS SERIOUS FOR IVORY COAST, WHICH IN RECENT YEARS HAS BEEN FORCED TO RELY HEAVILY ON THE EUROCURRENCY MARKET FOR OUTSIDE FINANCING. AN INCREASE IN MULTILATERAL SOURCES OF CONCESSIONARY FINANCING IS OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN HERE.

(2) IVORY COAST IS A MEMBER OF SEVERAL REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROUPINGS INCLUDING THE COUNCIL OF THE ENTENTE, CEA0, AND ECOWAS.
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OF THESE THE ENTENTE IS THE MOST ACTIVE AND OF MOST IMMEDIATE INTEREST TO THE IVORY COAST. UNDER THE SHELTER OF THE ENTENTE GUARANTY FUND THE IVORY COAST HAS BEEN ABLE TO BENEFIT TO A LIMITED EXTENT FROM USAID REGIONAL FUNDS AND OTHER DONOR ASSISTANCE TO PROJECTS IN CATTLE PRODUCTION, ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND TECHNICAL TRAINING. GOIC PLANNING AND PAST SUCCESS WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAS ENABLED IVORY COAST TO USE ENTENTE FUND RESOURCES RELATIVELY MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES.

(3) IVORY COAST HAS BEEN A LEADER IN THE MODERATE GROUP IN THE

OAU AND AT THE NONALIGNED CONFERENCE HELD IN LIMA LAST FALL. IT IS CONCERNED ABOUT COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN AFRICA, AND STOOD FIRM WITH COUNTRIES LIKE SENEGAL AND ZAIRE IN OPPOSING RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA AT THE OAU SUMMIT IN JANUARY. THE ANGOLAN COLLAPSE MAY LEAD TO SOME REASSESSMENTS, BUT IVORY COAST WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY A ROLE INDEPENDENT OF RADICAL ELEMENTS-AS FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE "DIALOGUE" WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

(4) THE GOIC AND PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY SEEK WIDER RECOGNITION AND INFLUENCE AND ARE PLEASED BY APPOINTMENTS SUCH AS GOIC UN AMBASSADOR AKE AS PRESIDENT OF ECOSOC AND BY THE GROWING NUMBER OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HAVE THEIR HEADQUARTERS IN ABIDJAN. THE MOST RECENT OF THESE IS THE NEWLY CREATED AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION(APU)-SEE ABIDJAN A-28-WHOSE PRESIDENT IS GOIC NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT (AND HEIR-APPARENT TO HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY) PHILIPPE YACE. BETWEEN NOW AND THE FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE APU IN FEBRUARY NEXT YEAR, THE GOIC WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PRESENT FRANCOPHONE NUCLEUS AUGMENTED BY THE GREATEST POSSIBLE NUMBER OF OTHER OAU STATES. B. AS ABOVE, IVORY COAST DECISIONS WILL BE AFFECTED BY POSITIONS TAKEN BY FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES (FRENCH INFLUENCE IN IVORY COAST REMAINS DOMINANT AND PERVASIVE); BY OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES; AND BY OTHERS IN THE THIRD WORLD. THE EXTENT TO WHICH IVORIAN POLICIES WILL BE INFLUENCED IN MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS WILL DEPEND IN GREAT MEASURE ON THE SUCCESS ATTAINED TOWARD THE OBJECTIVES DISCUSSED IN PARA A. FONMIN USHER HAS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR OF IVORIAN UNHAPPINESS IN THAT "NONALIGNED" POSITIONS TOO OFTEN ARE THOSE OF THE MORE OUTSPOKEN RADICALS. USHER SAID THAT NONALIGNED SOLIDARITY IS IMPORTANT TO IVORY COAST, LARGELY TO HELP EXERT PRESSURE ON CONSUMER NATIONS TO
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MAKE CONCESSIONS ON COMMODITY POLICIES. WHEN PROGRESS IS SEEN TO BE MADE TOWARD IVORIAN OBJECTIVES, NONALIGNED SOLIDARITY RECEIVES LESS PRIORITY AS APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE CASE FOLLOWING THE 7TH SPECIAL SESSION. C. IVORY COAST NORMALLY GIVES STANDING AND GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO ITS DELEGATES TO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS. EXCEPT ON MATTERS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO IVORY COAST, DELEGATES VOTE ACCORDING TO WHAT THEY KNOW THE GOIC POLICY LINE TO BE WITHOUT SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO ABIDJAN. ON THE RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF ISSUES IN WHICH IVORY COAST'S INTERESTS ARE DIRECTLY INVOLVED, OR WHICH ARE PARTICULARLY CONTENTIOUS(E.G. ZIONISM-RACISM OR KOREA AT THE 30TH UNGA), HOUPHOUET HIMSELF WILL OFTEN TELEPHONE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE GOIC AMBASSADOR AT THE UN. THIS PRACTICE IS LIKELY TO BE INCREASED BY THE RECENT INSTALLATION OF DIRECT DIALING FROM ABIDJAN TO THE U.S. INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL OF DELEGATIONS, HOWEVER, IS VERY WEAK. THE GOIC FOREIGN MINISTRY IS NOTORIOUS FOR ITS DISORGANIZATION AND THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT DEMARCHES MADE BELOW THE

LEVEL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF WILL HAVE ANY EFFECT WITHIN THE OFTEN SHORT TIME FRAME REQUIRED. THE PROBLEM IS COMPOUNDED BY THE PRACTICE IN IVORY COAST OF ALL IMPORTANT DECISIONS BEING TAKEN AT THE VERY TOP (HOUPHOUET) WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY LEARNING OF INITIATIVES LATTERLY AND OCCASIONALLY NOT AT ALL.

D. IVORY COAST PERMREPS HAVE LITTLE POLITICAL POWER, CERTAINLY NOT TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY ARE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL OR INSTRUCT. PERMREPS WILL INVARIABLY FOLLOW HOUPHOUET'S INSTRUCTIONS. THE PROBLEM IS RATHER, AS ABOVE, THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS AND WITH A WEAK FOREIGN MINISTRY, THE PERMREP IS TOO OFTEN LEFT TO HIS OWN DEVICES AND SUBJECT TO PRESSURES ON THE SPOT, NOTABLY FROM OTHER NONALIGNED REPRESENTATIVES.

E. U.S. RELATIONS WITH IVORY COAST ARE CLOSE AND CORDIAL. IVORY COAST IS RECEPTIVE TO U.S. INITIATIVES AND HAS NO PROBLEM ACCEPTING THE CONCEPT OF BILATERAL INTERACTION OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. GOIC HAS SUGGESTED THAT U.S. SHOULD MAKE CLEAR WHAT ISSUES ARE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE, AND LIKELIHOOD IS THAT GOIC WILL CONTINUE TO BE SUPPORTIVE. A COROLLARY TO THIS IS THAT THE GOIC EXPECTS THAT THE U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO BE FORTHCOMING ON ISSUES OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO IT, COMMODITY ISSUES AGAIN COMING FIRST ON THE LIST. IVORY COAST DOES SOLICIT U.S. CONFIDENTIAL
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SUPPORT ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES, AND HAS RECENTLY SOUGHT COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ON REOPENING THE COCOA NEGOTIATIONS.

2. FOR FURTHER BACKGROUND ON IVORY COAST SUGGEST DEPARTMENT MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS OFFICE MAY WISH TO REFER TO IVORY COAST 1975 YEAR-END ASSESSMENT, ABIDJAN 0295.
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